

Land Use & Housing Technical Advisory Committee
Subcommittee Action Plan Recommendations
November 2000

Item No.	TAC Recommendation	Status	Schedule
1	E-PERMITTING		
1.a	Enhance the Planning & Development Review website so that it is more user friendly and includes more on-line information such as information bulletins and fee schedules.	Staff has retained an outside consultant and is working with IT&C to redesign the website to be more user friendly and include more information currently available in paper format.	Complete design by November 2000; implement design within three to six months.
1.b	Improve website functionality by providing search by word.	The existing website has search capability by keywords. Staff will investigate improving the search engine capability as part of the website redesign (see 1.a).	Complete design by November 2000; implement design within three to six months.
1.c	Provide access to real-time project processing information on-line.	Currently the Plan Finder function allows the public to receive a plan check status by entering a Plan File Number. New project tracking software will include additional functionality to view project review status, comments, and schedule.	August 2001.
1.d	Provide the ability to estimate fees for a project.	The new tracking system will include a fee estimator for staff and the public to make basis fee estimates for certain project descriptions (see 1.c).	August 2001.
1.e	Provide ability to process no-plan permits on-line.	Certain no-plan permits are currently offered by Fax. Staff will coordinate with IT&C to implement the ability to offer the same permits on the website.	January 2001.
1.f	Provide enhanced geographic information, such as zoning, on the website.	Currently, the Department utilizes over 100 data layers on its own internal local area network. Some of this data is currently published on the Internet through SanGIS. A fair share funding proposal to accelerate land base conversion and zoning information will be prepared for LU&H consideration in January 2001.	Four years or less, depending on available funding.

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1	E-PERMITTING (continued)		
1.g	Pilot electronic review of building plans.	Staff has reviewed two plan documents using third party software available to the private sector. The City needs to procure enhanced software to increase the functionality of viewing online documents. A status meeting between staff and the subcommittee was held in late October to discuss development of a pilot program over the next several months.	January 2001.
1.h	Investigate best practices of other cities in the area of E-permitting.	Staff has visited several other cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Jose, as well as the County of Los Angeles to review their current e-permitting capabilities. The most common practice is the use of a third party web service to connect to the city's permit system for the issuance of "no plan" permits. The Department will begin development of a "no plan" permitting service on its website.	Begin design in November 2000 with implementation within six months.

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2	Plan Submittal Templates		
2.a	Create an enhanced standardized submittal template for building projects in order to streamline the review process.	Staff and the subcommittee have completed the design for three standardized templates for the submittal of projects for building permits. This will be piloted as a voluntary program which will offer reduced review time for those projects that fully comply with the enhanced submittal requirements.	Develop and implement pilot preferred plan check program in Nov/Dec 2000. Finalize and publicize program for all customers in January 2001.
2.b	Provide complete submittal requirements on-line.	As part of the implementation of the Land Development Code, all submittal requirements are currently under review. Once completed, these will be included in the redesign of the website (see 1.a).	Complete design by November 2000; implement design within three to six months.
2.c	Increase over-the-counter (OTC) plan check services to include more project types which require two to three hour plan check appointments.	Staff will pilot an expanded OTC service program to an expanded list of residential and commercial projects. This service will be offered by appointment only and will allow design professionals to work face-to face with City staff to finalize plans and issue permits.	January 2001.
2.d	Expand Homeowners Night.	Staff will look to expand Homeowners Night by adding additional staff, offering additional nights for the service, and providing the service to Community Service Centers.	January 2001.

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3	Self Certification of Certain Project Plan Checks		
3.a	Identify project types for self-certifying plan check for licensed professionals, such as Title 24 Energy plan check.	The Department has implemented self certification in three arenas; Master Plan Projects, minor civil engineering projects, and Landscape Plan Check. Staff will review other project types requiring building plan check for opportunities to allow self certification.	Completed first phase; under on-going evaluation.
3.b	Outsource the plan check function for building code compliance to handle increases in workload	Since May 2000, the Department has out-sourced plan check for minor projects to local area firms. This will be enable the Department to manage workload spikes and maintain service levels.	Completed.
3.c	Outsource discipline specific review, such as structural review, for large projects.	Staff will develop an “as needed” list to allow certain projects to retain outside firms for a component of the plan check process. The first phase of this recommendation will target structural plan check requirements. Staff is working with the Citywide architectural and engineering consultant program to develop a list of qualified consultants.	January 2001.
3.d	Improve training to increase consistency of code interpretation.	Outreach programs will be developed for staff and design professionals to discuss code issues and formulate agreed upon interpretations which can then be published. Each Department division will establish on-going customer training programs to assist customers in complying with code requirements. Several workshops have already been conducted (Special Inspection, Sign Regulations, and Self-Certification for Engineering Permits).	On-going.
3.e	Expand Express Plan Check to all review disciplines.	A revised Express Plan Check Program to require additional plan sets in order to expand review to all disciplines has been implemented. Overall fees will be based upon the existing Express Plan Check fees approved by City Council in November 1999.	Completed.

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4	Inspection Services		
4.a	Provide inspectors greater access to communication devices, such as voice mail, e-mail, and Internet access.	Management is evaluating the technical requirements to provide individual telephone numbers and voice mail accounts for all inspectors. Inspectors are provided access to computers, however, they are currently limited in their ability to access these devices to the first 45 minutes in the morning of their shift. Community Service Centers may provide an opportunity in some areas to access e-mail and the Internet on a more frequent basis.	November 2000.
4.b	Provide inspectors the ability to immediately update inspection results.	Procedures have been developed to provide more timely feedback to the Field Office for inspection results. Staff will also investigate creating an Inspection Results feature on the website (see 1.a).	November 2000.
4.c	Implement Combination Inspection for Simple Projects	Currently, the City utilizes combination inspection for single family and duplex structures. Expanding combination inspection to simple commercial projects, such as tenant improvements, would streamline the inspection process. Management will evaluate the technical and training requirements to implement this proposal.	May 2001.

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5	Department Customer Service		
5.a	Increase Customer Service Focus	<p>A Department employee committee has finalized a Customer Service Statement:</p> <p>“We value and respect our customers. We are dedicated to providing you professional, caring, and timely service.”</p> <p>The roll-out to employees is scheduled for November 2000. This will be measured by increasing customer surveys, including survey results for individual employees, and implementing a previous TAC recommendation to recognize and reward employees who provide excellent customer service.</p>	November 2000.